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normal the total percentage of "unfit" runs up to 10.1.

It should be added that, on the whole, conditions of life were not rigorous for this group. Food was more than abundant, means of protection and concealment ready, and natural enemies apparently not numerous, so that these percentages may prove to be unusual. They certainly seemed so to me and they are noted here not only as bearing on the general subject of selection, but in the hope that others may make known similar data.

WM. E. KELLICOTT  
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#### BOTANICAL NOTES

##### FLOWERING PLANT NOTES

W. C. Worsdell in the April, 1908, *Journal of Botany* discusses "The Affinities of *Paeonia*" and concludes that this genus is more closely related to *Magnoliaceae* than to *Ranunculaceae*, but he suggests that it should more properly be referred to a family ("order" in the older sense) by itself which he names *Paeoniaceae*.

Dr. Ernst A. Bessey's paper on "The Florida Strangling Figs," from the forthcoming nineteenth Annual Report of the Missouri Botanical Garden, deals with two native species of *Ficus* (*F. aurea* and *F. populnea*), the first of which has the curious habit of beginning its growth as an epiphyte and later becoming terrestrial by sending down numerous slender roots which eventually thicken and fuse together, finally wholly surrounding and strangling the host. Some striking photographs are reproduced in the plates. The curious fact is brought out that in *F. aurea* the seeds require light in order to germinate, no doubt related to its epiphytic habit.

F. M. Bailey, colonial botanist, continues his systematic "Contributions" in the *Queensland Agricultural Journal*, the November (1907) number containing descriptions of four new orchids from New Guinea, and the February (1908) number one new grass, *Arundinaria coboni* from Queensland.

Professor Doctor J. W. Harshburger has published in the *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* (Vol. 46, 1907) a suggestive paper on "Taxonomic Charts of the Monocotyledons and Dicotyledons." Two charts are reproduced, one of the monocotyledons, and the other of the dicotyledons, in which each family is given a place in a genetic tree. In the second chart the Gamopetalae are shown to be derived from two great phyla.

H. S. Hammond publishes a short account (accompanied with a plate of many good figures) of the embryology of *Oxalis corniculata*, in the February (1908) *Ohio Naturalist*, in which he calls attention to "a multicellular haustorium-like organ which is formed from the basal cells of the suspensor," and which burrows its way into the integuments until it finally reaches the testa.

Agnes Chase finds (*Botanical Gazette* for February, 1908) that the grasses of the genus *Triplasis* have fertile cleistogamous flowers enclosed in the sheaths of the stems. In *Amphicarpon amphicarpon* similar cleistogamous flowers occur in the sheaths of the subterranean stems.

Recent numbers of the "Leaflets of Philippine Botany" contain papers on "*Freycinetia* from Lucban," and "Some New Leguminosae" (by A. D. E. Elmer), "Some New and Critical Ferns" (by E. B. Copeland), and "A Fascicle of Tayabas Figs" (by A. D. E. Elmer). In the last paper forty-one species are enumerated.

In a sixty-six-page paper in the *Annals of Botany* for April, 1908, Ethel Sargent discusses the "Reconstruction of a Race of Primitive Angiosperms," this being an abstract of a series of eight lectures delivered in the University of London in May and June, 1907. In it the author holds to the monophyletic origin of the angiosperms, and avows her "complete agreement with the general conclusions" reached by Arber and Parkin in their "Origin of Angiosperms." These general conclusions, it will be remembered, are that the angiosperms were derived from cycadean ancestors similar to *Bennettites*, and

that the Ranal is the most primitive of the angiospermous types. The paper is well worth reading at this time when botanists are looking with increasing favor upon the strobilar theory in their speculations as to the origin of the angiospermous flower and, as a result, the origin of the group of *Angiospermae*.

#### BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

As an echo of the very general celebration of the bicentenary of Linné, the altogether admirable biographical sketch entitled "Carl von Linné" by Professor Dr. N. Wille is worthy of mention. Originally published in "Samtiden" for 1907, it is now republished as an eleven-page pamphlet in the Norwegian language, and is accompanied by a good portrait of Linné as he appeared about the time when he issued his greatest works, the "Species Plantarum" and the "Genera Plantarum."

A pamphlet entitled "Memorials of Lucien Marcus Underwood" is a sad reminder of the loss which botanical science sustained by the death of the distinguished botanist. The first paper is a biographical sketch by Dr. C. C. Curtis. From it we learn that he was born October 26, 1853, on a farm in central New York, a region already famous as the birth-place, nearly half a century earlier, of Dr. Asa Gray. Here he spent his boyhood working on the farm, attending first the country district school, and later a near-by academy (seminary), still later he went to college (Syracuse University), graduating in 1877. Then came a period of teaching various subjects in various places, including the Morrisville Union School, Cazenovia Seminary, Hedding College (Ill.), Wesleyan University (Ill.), Syracuse University, DuPauw University, Polytechnic Institute (Ala.) and Columbia University (1896). Eleven years of fruitful work in the university and the New York Botanical Garden, and then came the end on November 16, 1907. The second paper is an appreciative tribute by Dr. M. A. Howe, and this is followed by a list of publications including 212 titles. On examination one finds that more than half of these titles deal with *Hepaticae*

and *Pteridophyta*. His first paper appeared in 1878 and the last in 1907. The pamphlet closes with a collection of the resolutions passed by various institutions and societies.

A considerable portion of the April number of the *Journal of Mycology* is given to the life and work of William Ashbrook Kellerman, its founder and editor. He was born in Ashville, Ohio, May 1, 1850, received his collegiate education in Cornell University (graduating in 1874) and the University of Zurich (Ph.D., 1881). For five years he was a teacher in a state normal school (Wisconsin), then professor of botany in the Agricultural College of Kansas, from which he transferred to the Ohio State University in 1891. Four years ago he organized a scientific expedition to Guatemala, and followed it with a second, third and fourth. In the last, when near the end of the trip, he was stricken with a disease which caused his death March 8, 1908. The list of his publications includes upwards of 232 titles. His first paper, on the development of the flowers of *Gunnera chilensis* (inaugural dissertation), appeared in 1881, and the last installment of his well-known and very useful "Index to North American Mycology" was issued in the current number of the *Journal of Mycology*, on April 15, 1908. In 1885, with J. B. Ellis and B. M. Everhart, he began the publication of the *Journal of Mycology*, continuing it until its transfer to the United States Department of Agriculture, four years later, and resuming its publication again in 1902 and continuing it until his death. In 1903 he began the publication of a most helpful leaflet, the *Mycological Bulletin*, designed to help teachers and pupils in the public schools to know something about fungi. In the words of his sympathetic biographer, "the loss of such a man, upright in character, possessed of lofty ideals, and an enthusiasm which was an inspiration to all with whom he came in contact, will be felt not only by his students, but by botanists the world over."

Professor Dr. Pammel has rendered a distinct service to botanists in the preparation of a sketch of the life and work of Dr. Edwin James, and its publication in the *Annals of Iowa* (Vol. VII.). Edwin James was born

on a farm in Vermont, August 27, 1797, fitted for college in the country grammar school, graduated from Middlebury College in 1816. Later he studied medicine and thus acquired the degree of doctor of medicine. In 1820 he became the botanist and surgeon to Major Long's expedition to the Rocky Mountains. Ten years later he resigned from the army, and within a few years settled near Burlington, Iowa, where he engaged in farming. He died October 25, 1861. *Jamesia*, a very pretty Rocky Mountain shrub of the botanical family *Saxifragaceae* was dedicated to him by Torrey and Gray.

CHARLES E. BESSEY  
THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA

THE ADMINISTRATION OF SYRACUSE  
UNIVERSITY<sup>1</sup>

SYRACUSE, N. Y., April 17, 1908.

DEAN WILLIAM KENT,  
Syracuse University.

*Dear Sir:* The executive committee and the chancellor are firmly though reluctantly persuaded that your usefulness in this university is at an end and that your continued presence among us would be increasingly prejudicial to the peace and success of the university.

You have been a disappointment to the administration from almost the beginning of your official relation to the institution. We can not hope that you will be capable of any improvement in the future.

Without going into particulars, you will appreciate the fact that the trustees of a university can not possibly retain a dean who can not meet the chancellor or president of the institution upon amicable and even confidential terms and whom the chancellor can not address concerning the work of his college without being subject to the embarrassment of controversy and contention.

As much as I regret therefore the duty that is imposed upon me, I am compelled, acting upon the advice and with the unanimous concurrence of the executive committee of Syracuse University, to inform you that your connection with the university will be terminated with the close of the present college year. I am advised further

<sup>1</sup> There is here printed the recent correspondence between the Rev. Dr. James R. Day, chancellor of Syracuse University, and Professor Wm. Kent, dean of the College of Applied Science, together with a statement which Professor Kent has prepared at the request of the editor.

by the executive committee to inform you that if you prefer to submit your resignation, you may have that privilege.

Very truly yours,  
JAMES R. DAY,  
Chancellor

SYRACUSE, N. Y., April 20, 1908.  
CHANCELLOR JAMES R. DAY,  
Syracuse University.

*Dear Sir:* I beg to acknowledge receipt of your favor of the 17th inst., informing me of the unanimous action of the executive committee, and giving me the privilege of submitting my resignation.

Before deciding whether to submit my resignation now or to ask you to prefer charges against me and to let me be heard in my defense before being dismissed by a vote of not less than twelve trustees, according to section 4 of the university charter, I ask you to be more specific in regard to the following statement in your letter:

"You have been a disappointment to the administration from almost the beginning of your official relation to the institution. We can not hope that you will be capable of any improvement in the future."

If I have been a disappointment to the administration (I suppose that means yourself personally) I have not, as far as I know, been a disappointment to the trustees, faculty, students or alumni. I have not only done my duty as dean and professor of mechanical engineering to the best of my ability, but with all due modesty, I think no one else could have done it any better in my place. This question I am willing to leave to the judgment of experts in engineering education.

If I leave here at the end of five years' hard service it is only fair that my efforts in behalf of the college should receive such commendation from the board of trustees as I think they deserve, and that it should be made clear that I leave here not on account of any failure in my duty as dean or professor nor for any lack of ability as teacher or administrator, but only on account of the personal feelings of the chancellor.

I therefore request that you appoint a committee of three trustees, not members of the executive committee, to investigate into all matters relating to my administration of the offices I have held for the past five years, and report their conclusion to the executive committee.

Yours truly,  
WILLIAM KENT,  
Dean of College of Applied Science